

VIEWPOINT

THE BATTALION
TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY

FRIDAY
MARCH 13, 1981

By Jim Earle

Slouch

Two out of three ain't bad

As that time for deliverance from the more demanding aspects of university life, more commonly referred to as spring break, draws near, most students are no doubt saving a heavy sigh for this afternoon.

And soon, many will join the annual mass exodus to the Texas college student's Mecca — the Gulf of Mexico — to experience the healing properties of warm sunshine, liquid refreshment and laziness.

For some, the trip will be a chance to release built-up energy and thereby eliminate some of the "spring fever" infection. But for others, a few days beneath the sun and stars will do nothing more than compound the illness.

Without a doubt, we deserve next week's rest. A lot of students may be looking to the break as a temporary rescue or maybe a chance to catch up. But to those of us with suffering GPRs, it's really no more than a stay of execution.

We deserve it for what we've had to put up with for the last few weeks. The unseasonably fair weather we've had recently tries the patience of even the most diligent student.

Staff notebook

By Bernie Fette

Such weather has caused books, term papers, and in some cases, class attendance to drop to an all-time low on a student's list of priorities.

Finance has been replaced by Frisbee, Sociology by Sunning and Zoology by ZZZZZZ.

But then our profs should understand such a change in priorities ... shouldn't they?

After all, we need a chance to regain all the energy we've expended by fighting off the bag monster on one side and fending away the spring fever bug on the other.

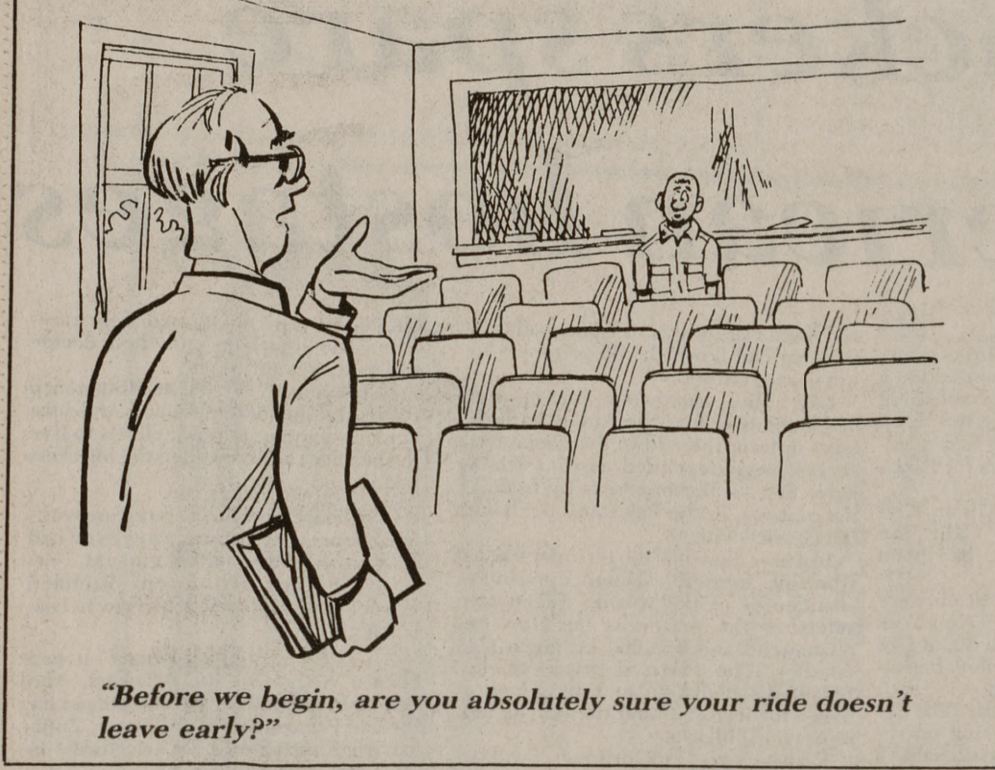
Crowded beaches and no-vacancy signs will likely be routine sights next week and

the profits from sales of alcoholic beverages in the southern part of the state surely skyrocket. In fact, why not take the trip by spending ten minutes a day picking up empty beer cans on the beach.

When they return, you'll find it easy to pick out of a crowd those who have spent the week at one of the seaside resorts. To be the ones whose complexions redden those of Hawaiian natives ... or in some cases, boiled lobsters.

And so, as several friends and I prepared for a three-day stay at Port Aransas in the cheapest condo we could find, the promises to be not only recreational, medicinal as well. Maybe just what the doctor ordered. I trust that ours will not be only maroon and white T-shirts advertising the South Texas beaches next week.

So if the doctor prescribed sunshine, freshments, and laziness and if for a reason the sunshine is in short supply, compensate with increased dosages of other two. After all, two out of three ain't bad.



'Outs' fail to reach voters with message

By STEVE GERSTEL
United Press International

WASHINGTON — Despite their finest efforts, neither the Democrats nor the Republicans have solved a vexing problem that plagues them whenever the other is ensconced in the White House — how to get the out-party message out to the American people.

It just cannot be done well. The Democrats gave it still another whirl recently — a response to President Reagan's economic message — and the result was predictable. It was pretty much of a flop.

In no way could the Democrats' response be compared to Reagan's message — not in staging, not in drama, not in performance and certainly not in coverage.

Don't blame the Democrats. They were up against a set of circumstances that would have thwarted the magic of the most brilliant television producer.

The Republican administration had as the star of its show not only Ronald Reagan the president, but also Ronald Reagan the master at communicating.

The Democrats fielded three virtually unknown members of Congress: Rep. Jim Wright of Texas and Sens. Gary Hart of Colorado and Lawton Chiles of Florida.

Wright, a grizzled veteran, is the House Democratic leader. Outside the House, the party and his district, he is hardly known.

In choosing Hart and Chiles, Senate Democrats — trying something a little new — put on two, younger fresher senators, instead of the leaders or the veterans. But Hart and Chiles are also unknowns.

Reagan delivered his message to a joint session of the Senate and House before a crowded audience that included many members of Congress, the Supreme Court, the Cabinet and the diplomatic corps.

Wright, Hart and Chiles were taped.

Reagan was televised live at 9 p.m. over all three networks. The Democrats' tape played on two networks the following Friday at 10:30 p.m. The third network had "Dallas" in that time slot.

The Democrats' response — sometimes called the congressional reply, although it is always partisan — fared no better in the newspapers. In contrast to the play given Reagan's message, it was generally kissed off.

But the Democrats' failure is by no means novel. The outparty in Congress has tried in vain for years and years to get its viewpoint seen and heard.

During Lyndon Johnson's presidency, Senate GOP leader Everett Dirksen and the House Republican leaders teamed for periodic news conferences and responses.

That led to the creation of the "Ev and Charlie (Halleck) show" and later the "Ev and Jerry (Ford) show."

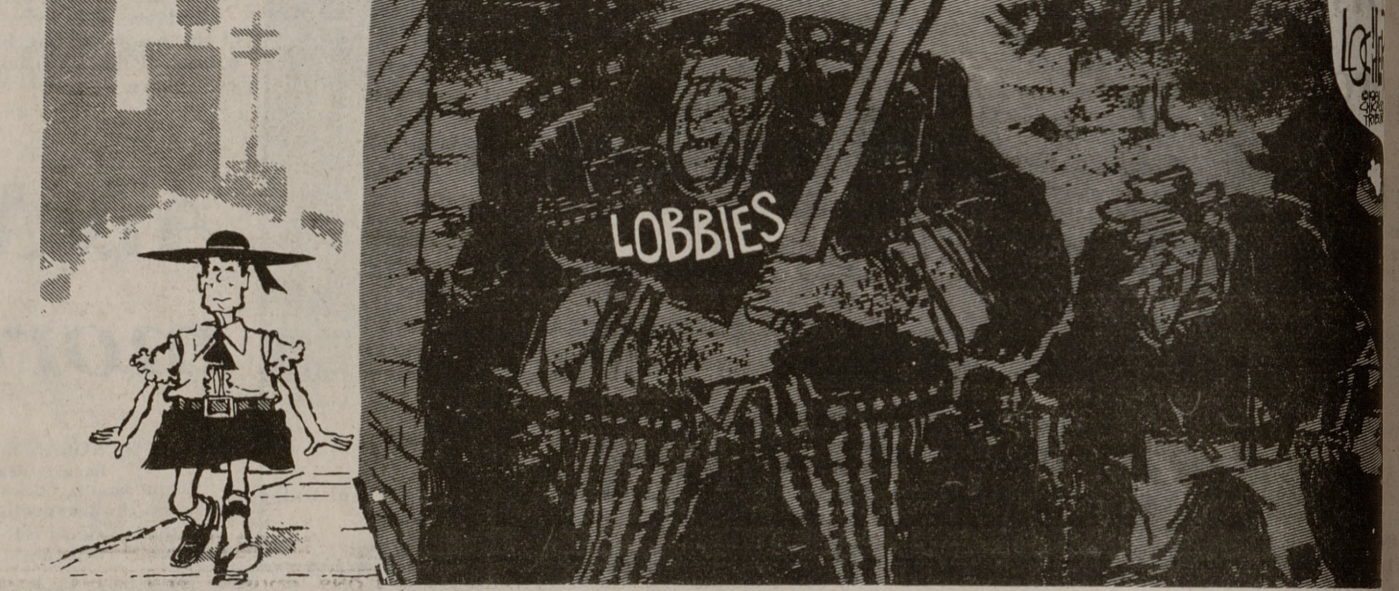
Neither Halleck nor Ford were much in the way of entertainment, but Dirksen, an oratorical spellbinder and master showman, at least made the "shows" good entertainment. Still, they proved weak as GOP responses.

Then Senate Democratic leader Mike Mansfield, during the Nixon years, tried almost every conceivable combination with little success.

The best effort came in the closing days of the off-year election campaign in 1970 after Nixon had made a widely rebroadcast speech dealing with crime and the streets.

The Democrats picked Sen. Edmund Muskie of Maine, a Lincolnesque figure with a rich and resonant voice, and showed him responding live from his home in Maine. It was a marked success, not yet repeated.

The Democrats — and somewhere down the line the Republicans — will keep on trying. They also will keep on failing.



It's your turn

Handicapped deserve modifications

Editor:

In reply to Roberto Dillow Castaneda's letter of February 23rd:

Well, Mr. Castaneda, you certainly seem to have covered all of the bases. No matter who replies or how he or she replies, you have a classification for him. I guess by your standards I am a "Jesus Freak" and a "Good Samaritan," or even, Heaven forbid, a "Polly Anna." Now that that's all cleared up, you needn't read any further.

Mr. Castaneda, suppose you were to be involved in a serious auto accident; and as a result became a paraplegic. From the tone of your letter it is clear that you would decide to quietly row out to sea so you wouldn't be a "burden to society."

Every living soul on this earth has value and needs to feel wanted and accepted. By designing buildings, sidewalks, classrooms and other facilities with the handicapped in mind we simply send out the message, "You're O.K.; you're welcome here." Designing these facilities by ignoring their needs is simply selfish and unsympathetic. Why should we burden the physically impaired by ignorantly constructing everything well out of their reach? These design modifications do not significantly add to the cost of any given structure if included from the beginning. The modifications to existing facilities is simply a way to correct our past oversights.

The number of handicapped students on campus is of no consequence. If this school were to have only one disabled applicant I would say the modifications are worth it, because we didn't scare him away with the futility of any individual effort. When we cease to think about our fellow human beings, we cease to be human ourselves. While the sidewalk ramps should be

used by anyone on wheels who can be considered a pedestrian, we mustn't forget their original intent. Wheelchair students have first priority. The question did not involve a willingness to share but an abuse of the ramps. You strike me as one who would park in a handicapped parking place when you have a little trouble finding another nearby spot, without regard to the intent of the reserved space. This practice has reached epidemic proportions at A&M, to the extent that the disabled student is often forced to park either illegally or far from the building which is his destination. This behavior is what renders such efforts a "waste of time, manpower, and money." I'm sorry that such facilities for the handicapped inconvenience you. Sit down sometime and calculate the exact cost to yourself to provide these services. It is less than you probably think. If you feel that you are required to shoulder more of the burden than is fair, I would welcome a personal conversation on the matter.

Many of my friends are physically handicapped in one way or another. They are good friends and some of the best students I have known. In my mind they have proved their worth infinitely farther than you have proved your own (you don't seem to have anything important to say; you merely complain.) In the true sense of the word, these people are not handicapped. You, Mr. Castaneda, are handicapped. You are shortsighted, close-minded, selfish, and I won-

der whether you have the capacity for compassion, or charity. I don't mean to name or sling mud; you truly have sympathy.

Rifle team good, too

Editor:

In response to a recent column by Richard Oliver concerning successful teams at Texas A&M, we the members of Fightin' Texas Aggie rifle team would like to point out that another successful team does exist. The team is recognized as a varsity sport and has been ranked in the top 20 nationally for the past two years. Nationally ranked teams that we have defeated thus far this year include: Florida Institute of Technology, University of Alaska, and United States Air Force Academy.

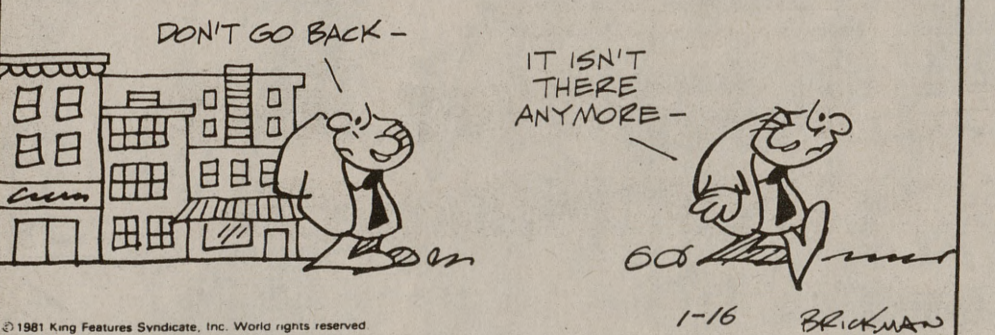
In regional standings, we are the champions of the Southwest Rifle Association (our equivalent of the SWC), and have been for four of the last five years. In the last three years we have been undefeated. Furthermore, we have not lost a match since 1975.

In light of the above accomplishments we feel that we should be included in the ranks of successful teams at Texas A&M.

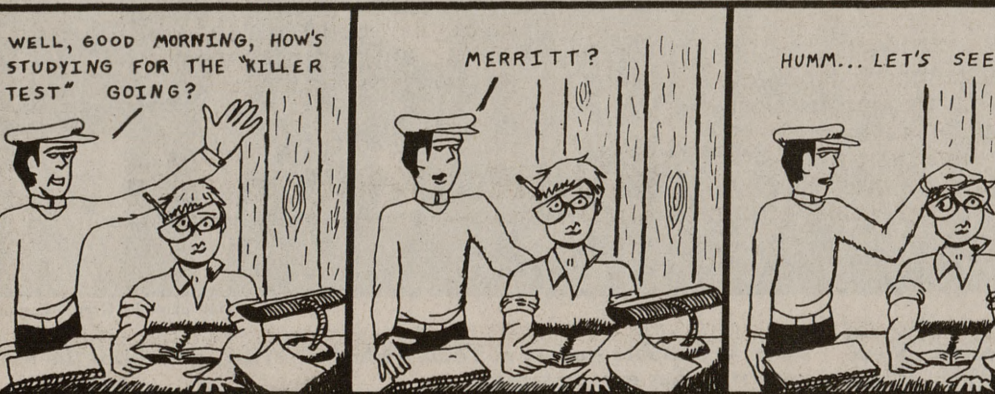
Michael B. Winkler

Editor's note: This letter was accompanied by four other signatures.

the small society by Brickman



Warped



By Scott McCullar



THE BATTALION
U.S.P.S. 045 360

The Battalion also serves as a laboratory newspaper for students in reporting, editing and photography courses within the Department of Communications.

Questions or comments concerning any editorial matter should be directed to the editor.

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Letters to the Editor should not exceed 350 words in length, and are subject to being cut if they are longer. The editorial staff reserves the right to edit letters for style and length, but will make every effort to maintain the author's intent. Each letter must also be signed, show the address and phone number of the writer.

Columns and guest editorials are also welcome, and are not subject to the same length constraints as letters. Address all inquiries and correspondence to: Editor, The Battalion, 216 Reed McDonald, Texas A&M University, College Station, TX 77843.

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